

## GATHERING OPIUM.

How the Petals and Juice of the Poppy Plant Are Procured.

Opium growing is a sort of garden cultivation, the poppy plants being grown in little squares or beds intersected by tiny water channels for irrigation wherever this is possible. The growth of the plants is carefully tended, and at length the time comes when they burst out into flower, and the fields look like a sheet of silver as the white petals of the flowers glisten in the morning dew.

These beautiful petals are the first produce of the crop, for the women and children of the cultivators' families come forth and pick them off one by one and carefully dry them, so that they may serve afterward as the covering of the manufactured cakes of opium. Then the poppies, with their bare capsule heads, remain standing in the open field until it is considered that they are ripe for lancing. The cultivators then come forth in the evening, and with an implement not unlike the knives of a cupping instrument they scarify the capsule on its sides with deep incisions, so that the juice may exude.

In the early morning the cultivators reappear with a scraping knife and their earthenware pots, and they scrape off the exuded juice and collect it in their pots. And this is crude opium.—Blackwood's Magazine.

## A BALKY MULE.

Remedies Were Applied, and He Moved Just a Little Bit.

"Yessuh," said the negro through the borrowed telephone. He stood on one foot in the drug store and talked in his natural voice, which made the bottles jingle on the shelves. The numerous people in the store heard all he said as a natural consequence, but could not hear the conversation at the other end. They deduced, however, from the negro's remarks that he was talking with his boss and that he was a teamster by profession.

"Yessuh," he said, "I tried dat."

"Yessuh. De ma-an wif the plug hat he tried dat."

"No, suh. De ma-an ain't much buht. His nose hit's busted."

"Yessuh. I done dat."

"No, suh. De 'I'll boy he ain't buht none a-tall; jes' jolted."

"Yessuh. De schoolteacheh. Hit to his close up some."

"Fire? Yessuh. Not much; no, suh. He moved a little bit, yessuh."

"Yessuh. One o' de wheels was burnt a little."

"Two o' de wheels—yessuh. Well, suh, de wagin hit' burnt up. No, suh. Dey ain't nuffin' left."

"De muel? Yessuh."

"He's dah yit—yessuh."—Galveston News.

## Olden Time "Raiment."

In early Bible days richly embroidered raiment was enumerated with the gold, silver and other valuable property of a rich man. In that primitive age Dame Fashion was not the fickle goddess she is at present, and the "raiment" so frequently mentioned in the Holy Scriptures descended from father to son as a valuable part of the inheritance. Raiment was often sent, with gold and gems, as a present to dignitaries. It took not months, but years, to ornament some of these garments, and the gold thread so lavishly used in embroidering them was real gold. Moses describes the process of making the gold thread that was used in ornamenting the tabernacle. The habit of making presents of rare needlework is still common among eastern nations that changed their customs so slowly.

## Weeping Trees.

The phenomenon of "weeping trees"—that is, of trees shedding drops of liquid—is ascribed by Dr. Sharp in the Cambridge Natural History to the influence of plant bugs. The familiar frog hopper which produces the so-called cuckoo spit on so many of our plants belongs to this family of insects. A note in the London Field calls attention to some interesting observations on this subject made by Dr. Annandale and contributed by him to the records of the Indian museum. Dr. Annandale while collecting insects in western Bengal felt what he thought was rain from a clear sky through the foliage of the trees. On investigation he found that it fell from the leaves and was due to a species of plant bug present in enormous numbers.

## An Impostor.

"Mebbe you'd like to put a piece about me in yer paper," quavered the old man, hobbling up to the city editor's desk.

"What have you done?" demanded the arbiter of publicity's destiny.

"Nothin' much, but I was a hundred years old yesterday."

"A hundred, eh? But can you walk without a stick and read fine print without glasses?"

"N-no."

"You are an impostor!"

The old man broke down and confessed he was only ninety-seven.—Cleveland Leader.

## A WONDERFUL SNAKE.

It Defied the Attacks of the Serpent Killing Iguana.

Snakes on the pampas of South America have many enemies. Burrowing owls feed on them, and so do herons and storks, which kill them with a blow of their javelin beaks. The tyrant bird picks up the young snake by the tail and, flying to a branch or stone, uses the reptile as a flail until its life is battered out. The large lizard of the pampas, the iguana, is a famous snake killer. It smites the snake to death with its powerful tail. Mr. Hudson in his "Naturalist in La Plata" tells this story:

One day a friend of mine was riding out looking after his cattle. One end of his lasso was attached to his saddle, and the remainder of the forty foot line was allowed to trail on the ground. The rider noticed a large iguana lying apparently asleep, and, although he rode within a few inches, it did not stir. But no sooner had the rider passed than the trailing lasso attracted the lizard's attention. It dashed after the slowly moving rope and dealt it a succession of violent blows with its tail. When the whole of the lasso, several yards of which had been pounded in vain, had passed by, the iguana, with uplifted head, gazed after it with astonishment. Never had such a wonderful snake crossed its path before.

## THE HEDGEHOG.

Tactics It Employs in Making a Meal of an Adder.

The hedgehog is the possessor of tastes which, like Sam Weller's knowledge of London, are "extensive and peculiar," says the Scotsman. Scorning fastidiousness, it can make a hearty meal of nearly any insect and is one of the vertebrates which can tackle the cockroach. For effectual extermination of beetles and crickets it is as useful as a mongoose among the rats, but it is not generally known that it has a partiality toward snakes and adders.

The methods it employs for the attack are interesting. Having come upon the adder, it goads that reptile to the offensive and at the first dart immediately rolls into a ball. The adder is then left to attack the spines, in which encounter it naturally comes off second best. After awhile, when the hedgehog feels that his antagonist has exhausted his power, it once more opens out and makes a bite at the adder's back, thereby breaking its spine. It then proceeds to crunch the whole of the reptile's body by means of its powerful jaws, and after that it is said to start at the tail and devour its prey.

## Subtle Flattery.

Waiters Nos. 1 and 2 peeped out at the baldheaded man, then ducked behind the screen.

"None of him for me," said Waiter No. 1. "He doesn't tip."

"Same here," said Waiter No. 2.

"I'll fix him," said Waiter No. 3.

He took an order for soup. Before serving it he showed the two mutineers a hair floating on the surface of the soup. They marveled then, and they marveled still more when at the end of the baldheaded man's dinner the waiter returned with a dollar bill.

"Ninety-nine baldheaded men in a hundred can be worked that way," he said. "If the customer doesn't see the hair himself I call his attention to it and make him think it fell out of his own head. The fact that he had a hair to lose so appeals to his vanity that he loves me for finding it and gives me a tip big enough to cover the cost of a dozen plates of soup."—Chicago Tribune.

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